

provide a computer link for constituents to contact their representatives and to learn what is happening in the National Assembly.

In looking at political transitions throughout the world, we have learned that there are times when stopping the fighting is the easy part. When you look at the development of democratic institutions—such as these constituent service offices—we see historic changes that give people a greater say in the decisions that affect their lives. We see historic changes that bring greater confidence to the people who vote and the people who hold office. Congressman MOAKLEY and I are truly honored to be able to participate in that process.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLES F. BASS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 28, 1999

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, on October 13, 1999, I was unavoidably detained during consideration of the Sanford amendment to H.R. 1993.

However, had I been present during rollcall No. 496, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 28, 1999

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I missed 4 recorded votes while I was working in my district. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows: Rollcall vote 536, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H. Con. Res. 194 to recognize the contributions of 4-H Clubs and their members to voluntary community service, I would have voted "yes."

Rollcall vote 535, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2303, The History of the House Awareness and Preservation Act, I would have voted "yes."

Rollcall vote 534, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 754, the Made in America Information Act, I would have voted "yes."

Rollcall vote 533, on approving the Journal, I would have voted "yes."

URGING UNITED STATES TO SEEK GLOBAL CONSENSUS SUPPORTING MORATORIUM ON TARIFFS AND SPECIAL, MULTIPLE, AND DISCRIMINATORY TAXATION OF ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 26, 1999

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 190, the Global Internet Tax Freedom Act. This important legislation calls on the administration to take a tough stand at the World Trade Organization Ministerial to keep the Internet tax free worldwide.

The Internet has appeared in an era when we realize how taxation discourages, even thwarts commerce. Against the natural inclination of many, a bare-bone majority has succeeded in keeping the Internet tax-free in the 50 United States. It is important that we continue the progress made here to other nations.

I am going to attend the World Trade Organization's meeting in Seattle next month as a no-Internet-tax fanatic. Along with dozens of House colleagues, I will be preaching from House Con. Res. 190, which urges world leaders to make permanent a temporary moratorium on Internet taxes. The timing is important. I expect that dozens of members of the community of nations have dozens of pressing needs, and unique circumstances, and compelling motives to put a national checkout counter and tax-collector at the end of a web page.

We all fancy ourselves as free-traders—except when there is some benefit derived from well, making a little innocuous exception. And the world's markets are made up of millions and millions of little exceptions. Fortunately, the Internet is too young and innocent to have been susceptible to those little exceptions.

Years ago, a reporter asked the economist Milton Friedman about the North American Free Trade Agreement and its annexes. "Miserable," replied Friedman, "That's no free trade agreement. It's managed trade. A real free-trade agreement would take one sentence, or if it's verbose, may be a paragraph."

My hope is that all 134 nations will embrace the simplicity and brilliance of that philosophy when it comes to Internet Commerce. E-Commerce is critical to our continued growth and prosperity. We must leave it free to flourish worldwide.

LEGISLATION MAKING THE CHIEF AGRICULTURAL NEGOTIATOR POSITION AT USTR PERMANENT

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 28, 1999

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce a bill today with Representatives KENNY HULSHOF and WES WATKINS to ensure our Nation's agricultural producers have a permanent trade ambassador. American farmers and ranchers need and deserve a representative within the Office of the United States Trade Representative to focus on agricultural trade issues.

My congressional district in southern Idaho ranks among the country's more important agricultural producing congressional districts. A wide range of products are raised in the district including potatoes, sugar beets, wheat, barley, livestock, and a host of specialized commodities. Idaho producers of all of these commodities have conveyed to me the importance of having their concerns heard, understood, and advocated during the course of bilateral trade negotiations.

Since being elected to represent the second congressional district of Idaho, I have become increasingly concerned by the extent of the agricultural crisis in Idaho and the role Canadian and European trade policies have played in exacerbating the problem. Uncompetitive trade practices threaten the survival of agri-

culture not only in Idaho, but throughout the United States. During the August district work period, I met with numerous farmers and ranchers throughout my congressional district and was told of the dire financial conditions many producers are facing. Many are at risk of losing their generations-owned family operations. I was regularly told of the need to open up new markets, reduce Europe's export subsidies, reduce tariffs worldwide, and ensure nontariff barriers do not inhibit market access to new products. Ultimately, my agricultural producers expect me to work to ensure unfair trade practices engaged in by our competitors are addressed by the WTO in a transparent and swift fashion, with strong enforcement mechanisms in place to guarantee compliance and fairness in the global marketplace. Farmers and ranchers in Idaho strongly believe making the Agricultural Ambassador position permanent will enhance their ability to secure new markets and compete in the global marketplace.

I firmly believe that in order to secure the long-term stability of our agricultural economy we need to support the development of an open and fair trading system. Without a strong voice for addressing uncompetitive trade practices, our agricultural producers will continue to operate at a competitive disadvantage in the global marketplace. The creation of the Agricultural Ambassador (the Chief Agricultural Negotiator) position by Ambassador Charlene Barshefsky has already had a significant and positive impact on our country's farmers and ranchers.

I have met with the current Agricultural Ambassador, Mr. Peter Scher, on a variety of agricultural issues important to Idaho, and appreciate his work on behalf of our farmers and ranchers. I am concerned that when this Administration departs the gains made by Mr. Scher in advancing the needs of America's farmers will be lost. At a time when agriculture in this country is struggling and is slated to be the number one issue at the upcoming round of WTO trade talks, it is unfathomable to me that we would not ensure the permanent presence of a strong, clear voice and vigorous advocate for agriculture is present at international negotiations. It is crucial the Agriculture Ambassador position be made permanent and transcend administrations, especially now when we are beginning to engage in intense multilateral negotiations on a host of agricultural issues.

This legislation presents an opportunity for Congress to help our ranchers and ensure the opportunities for expanding and competing in new markets are not compromised in future trade negotiations. Our farmers and ranchers need to know their interests are being represented at trade negotiations and should be secure in the knowledge that their advocate will permanently remain in place. I hope my colleagues will recognize the importance and significance of this legislation and join me in the effort to make the Agricultural Ambassador position permanent.